

VZCZCXYZ0006
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHUL #0063/01 0130809
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 130809Z JAN 09
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2899
RUCPDOC/USDOC WASHDC 7994
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC//DDI/OEA//
RHMMUNA/USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//FPA//
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DB-Z//

UNCLAS SEOUL 000063

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/K, EAP/PD, INR/EAP/K AND INR/IL/P
TREASURY FOR OASIA/WINGLE
USDOC FOR 4430/IEP/OPB/EAP/WGOLICKE
STATE PASS USDA ELECTRONICALLY FOR FAS/ITP
STATE PASS DOL/ILAB SUDHA HALEY
STATE PASS USTR FOR IVES/WEISEL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [ECON](#) [KS](#) [US](#)
SUBJECT: PRESS BULLETIN - January 13, 2009

Top Headlines

Chosun Ilbo
Illegal Use of State and Public Land Increases Fivefold
in Four Years

JoongAng Ilbo
Ruling Camp Officials: "Heads of National Intelligence Service,
National Police Agency and National Tax Service
will be Replaced"

Dong-a Ilbo
Wife of Detained Former National Tax Service (NTS) Chief Puts
High-Priced Painting for Sale, and Claims: "I Received It
from Wife of Current NTS Chief in Early 2007,
when My Husband was Still in Office"

Hankook Ilbo, All TVs
Lee, Aso Agree to Help Japanese Companies Invest in ROK Industrial
Complexes for Parts Production

Hankyoreh Shinmun
Foreign Media: Israel Even Aims to Devastate Underground Hamas
Military Facilities if Its Ground Incursion
into Downtown Gaza City Ends

Segye Ilbo
President Lee Expected to Reshuffle Four to Eight Cabinet Ministers,
Including Finance Minister Kang Man-soo

Seoul Shinmun
ROKG Considers Selling Ssangyong Motor Co. after Strengthening Its
SUV Unit; Ssangyong, ROK's Fifth-Largest Automaker, Filed for Court
Receivership Last Week

Domestic Developments

[¶](#) 1. President Lee Myung-bak and Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso
agreed during yesterday's summit meeting in Seoul to put aside
historical disputes and enhance bilateral cooperation to deal with
the global economic crisis. The two leaders also stressed the
importance of maintaining the Six-Party framework to resolve the
North Korean nuclear issue and agreed to work closely with the
incoming Obama Administration. (All)

International News

11. President George W. Bush, during his last official press conference on Jan. 12 (local time), said that North Korea is still a problem. President Bush was quoted as saying: "One of my concerns is that North Korea might still be pushing for its alleged highly enriched uranium (HEU) program." (Hankyoreh, Seoul, all TVs)

Media Analysis

North Korea

Most of the ROK media gave play to President George W. Bush's last official press conference at the White House on Jan. 12 (local time), in which he said that North Korea is still a problem. President Bush was quoted as saying: "In order to advance our relations with North Korea, the North must honor the commitments it made to allow for strong verification measures to be in place so as to ensure that they do not develop a highly enriched uranium program. One of my concerns is that North Korea might still be pushing for the alleged program."

In a related development, the ROK media reported that President Lee Myung-bak and Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso, during their summit meeting in Seoul yesterday, stressed the importance of maintaining the Six-Party framework to rid North Korea of nuclear weapons and agreed to work closely with the incoming Obama Administration.

Gaza

Conservative Chosun Ilbo ran an inside-page report saying that after 12 days of fighting in Gaza, Israel now faces a choice - pursue a ceasefire or push ahead with the kind of messy, door-to-door urban fighting to remove Hamas, which might cause the death toll to rise dramatically among both Palestinian civilians and its own soldiers. Chosun went on to say that the Israeli prime minister and the defense minister are differing over whether to escalate the two-week offensive, with the former supporting pushing ahead with the offensive while the latter is arguing for a ceasefire, citing deteriorating international opinions. Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo's headline read: "Israel Enlists Reserves... Gaza Offensive Reaches Its Final Stages." Conservative Dong-a Ilbo wrote in the headline: "Israel Pushes the Offensive into a Third and Final Phase in which the Army Takes Over Larger Areas of Gaza." Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun headlined its story: "Israel Even Ready to Devastate Underground Hamas Military Facilities if Its Ground Incursion into Downtown Gaza City Ends; Is Israel's Final Objective to Reoccupy Gaza?"

Stephens

1